



State of North Carolina  
Office of the Governor

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**2003 SESSION BRINGS PROGRESS TO NORTH CAROLINA**  
***FOCUS ON ECONOMY, JOBS AND EDUCATION***

**RALEIGH** – Gov. Mike Easley today praised lawmakers for their actions to improve the economy, reduce the size of government and protect education during the 2003 legislative session.

“North Carolina legislators stepped up to the plate and put the people of this state ahead of partisan politics,” said Easley. “Despite a tough economy and a national recession, North Carolina is one of only a handful of states that passed a timely budget which invests in our economy and protects education.

“At times, tensions ran high, but, in the end, North Carolina can be proud of the accomplishments of the 2003 legislature.”

***2003 Legislative Accomplishments***

**State Budget**

- **Passed in a timely manner** – as Raleigh gets on the same time line as the rest of the state
- **Control spending** – over one billion in cuts enabled the budget to remain under the Easley spending cap
- **Make progress in education** – class sizes in second grade were reduced and the academic prekindergarten program (More at Four) was expanded to serve 10,000 children – as our writing and reading scores zoom upwards in national rankings. Teacher pay was hiked, as we are now above the national median.
- **Maintain fiscal integrity** – rebuild rainy day fund and provide management flexibility to allow agencies to use resources more effectively – keeping our top 4 national rating in fiscal integrity.